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a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru

Her Majesty's Inspectorate
for Education and Training in Wales

**A report on
Cwrt Rawlin Primary School**

**Cae Meillion
Caerphilly
CF83 1SN**

Date of inspection: May 2011

by

Mr Stephen Dennett

Under Contract for

**Estyn, Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education
and Training in Wales**

During each inspection, inspectors aim to answer three key questions:

Key Question 1: How good are the outcomes?

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?

Inspectors also provide an overall judgement on the school's current performance and on its prospects for improvement.

In these evaluations, inspectors use a four-point scale:

Judgement	What the judgement means
Excellent	Many strengths, including significant examples of sector-leading practice
Good	Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement
Adequate	Strengths outweigh areas for improvement
Unsatisfactory	Important areas for improvement outweigh strengths

The report was produced in accordance with Section 28 of the Education Act 2005.

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Context

Cwrt Rawlin Primary School is situated in the town of Caerphilly and was opened in September 2001. The social and economic circumstances of the area served by the school are mainly advantaged; most pupils come from around the school.

There are currently 369 pupils on roll aged three to 11, including 23 part-time children in the nursery. Around 3% of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is below the local and national averages. No pupils are looked after by the local authority (LA). Approximately 11% of the pupils have additional learning needs (ALN) and 11 have statements of special educational need (SEN). Pupils have a wide range of additional needs, including physical disability. English is the home language of nearly all pupils, nearly all of whom are from white backgrounds; no pupils speak Welsh at home. Since the school's last inspection in May 2005, the number on roll has risen.

The 2010–2011 individual school budget per pupil is £2,706, which compares with a maximum of £6,296 and a minimum of £2,486 for primary schools in Caerphilly. The school has the 63rd highest budget per pupil out of the 75 primary schools in Caerphilly.

Summary

The school's current performance	Good
The school's prospects for improvement	Good

Current performance

The current performance of the provider is good because:

- Standards in literacy and numeracy are good throughout the school.
- Pupils' skills in information and communication technology (ICT) are very good.
- Pupils' wellbeing is good and their behaviour is often very good.
- The school provides pupils with a worthwhile range of learning experiences, with exceptional provision for the arts.
- Teaching, learning and assessment are good throughout the school.
- There are good levels of care, support and guidance for all groups of pupils.
- Leadership and management are good and the school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis.

Prospects for improvement

The school has good prospects for improvement because:

- The actions taken by the school to improve aspects, such as reading, have led to measurable improvement.
- The senior management team has a clear picture of the school's performance, its strengths and areas for development; they show a strong determination that it should improve further.
- The school's development plans are well focused and clearly set out aspects that need improving.
- Effective use is made of assessment information to set targets for improvement and identify groups of pupils that are underperforming.
- Standards at key stage 2 have risen since the school's last inspection.

Recommendations

In order to further improve provision and raise standards, the school should:

R1: Improve standards and provision in Welsh by:

- establishing clear progression of sentence patterns from foundation phase to Year 6;
- planning consistent opportunities for using Welsh incidentally in a wide range of class and whole school activities.

What happens next?

The school will draw up an action plan which shows how the school is going to address the recommendation.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Good

Standards: Good

Children make good progress in the Foundation Phase and Year 2. By the end of key stage 1 in 2010, standards were below the family (a group of schools with similar characteristics) average, but above the national and local averages in all three core subjects (English, mathematics and science). Standards have remained above average over the last three years. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher level 3 was above the family, local and national averages in English and science but in mathematics it was below the family average. Compared with schools with a similar number of pupils eligible for free school meals, the school was in the lower 50%. In 2010 girls did significantly better than boys at key stage 1 overall, but the gap in performance is narrowing.

The school's performance at key stage 2 in 2010 was above average, as it has been for the past three years. In mathematics and science, pupils' attainment in 2010 was below the family average, but above the local and national averages. Attainment in English was above all three indicators. Compared with similar schools, the school was in the upper 50% overall, but in the lower 50% for English, mathematics and science. Standards improved in 2009 and declined slightly in 2010, but overall the trend is upward. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher level 5 was below the family in English, but above the local and national averages. In mathematics and science it was above all three indicators. Girls did better than boys at key stage 2, but the gap in performance has now been reduced. Pupils make good progress overall at key stage 2 in core subjects and most make at least two National Curriculum levels progress between Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils with ALN make good progress in relation to their starting points and capabilities. The school's inclusion policy means that there are an above average number of pupils with statements of educational need, which sometimes has a negative effect on published results.

In lessons, pupils generally make good progress. They use their speaking skills well when explaining their working out in mathematics, for example. Their reading skills are good and they use them effectively. Most pupils apply their writing skills well to write descriptions of monsters, for example and standards of handwriting and presentation are good. Many pupils have very good ICT skills, which they use effectively when producing presentations and conducting research. Standards in the arts are exceptional and there are many examples of outstanding artwork around the school. Music and dance have high profiles and pupils' performance in the orchestra is excellent.

Overall pupils make good progress in their Welsh language skills. Nearly all pupils practise question and answer sequences and the current 'phrase of the week' with enthusiasm and appropriate accuracy. The majority of pupils read sentences from the whiteboard and worksheets confidently while a significant minority of more able pupils read a range of simple books. Pupils from Year 1 to Year 6 use a variety of methods to develop their writing skills well. They have a good repertoire of Welsh songs and nearly all pupils use Welsh greetings as a matter of course. However, the

progression of sentence patterns from the foundation phase to upper key stage 2 is not sufficiently clear and consistent, and pupils' use of incidental Welsh in registration and other lessons is variable through the school.

Wellbeing: Good

Pupils' wellbeing is a strong feature of the school. Their attitudes to healthy living and physical exercise are very good. All pupils feel valued and safe in a secure and caring environment and they know who to speak to when they have concerns. Most pupils are well motivated, have very good attitudes towards learning and display good levels of concentration. Many pupils work hard at solving problems and have a good understanding of how to improve their work. They are involved in the planning of what and how they learn. The school has a wide range of links with the community and the social and communication skills that this helps to develop prepares them well for life and work outside school. All pupils understand the importance of showing care and concern for each other and the school environment. Pupils behave well in and around the school and they are polite courteous and respectful towards others. The very active school council plays an important part in the life of the school and is highly effective as a pupil voice. Attendance is very good at 95.4% and is above the LA and national level. Nearly all pupils arrive punctually.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?	Good
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Learning experiences: Good

The school meets the needs of pupils well. It provides a curriculum that is broad, balanced and coherent. Teachers actively involve pupils, particularly in the foundation phase in choosing the content and activities for each topic. Lessons are planned to include a range of tasks that provide a good level of challenge for pupils of all abilities. All pupils benefit from enriched learning experiences, particularly in ICT and the creative arts, which have some aspects of sector leading practice. For example the school has a very accomplished orchestra, high quality artwork and a high skills level in PE and dance. An extensive range of extra-curricular activities enhances pupils' learning from the foundation phase to the end of key stage 2.

The development of pupils' literacy, numeracy and ICT skills is planned well to ensure a clear progression from the foundation phase through key stage 2. Teachers explain clearly in every lesson which skills will be taught and how pupils may know that they have achieved them. Where a small minority of pupils have difficulties, relevant intervention programmes are in place to address the issue promptly and effectively. More challenging tasks for more able and talented pupils ensure that these pupils often achieve an exceptional standard.

Planning for the development of Welsh language skills is integrated well into the general curriculum themes. Question and answer sequences based on relevant topics are practised orally and in pupils' written work in weekly lessons. Many displays of pupils' work are labelled bilingually and current phrases and words are displayed to support pupils' learning in nearly all classrooms. The use of some Welsh terms in other lessons is developing well. However, the planned progression of sentence patterns from the foundation phase through key stage 2 is not sufficiently

established. The use of incidental Welsh in registration, collective worship and extra curricular activities is underdeveloped and varies from class to class. Planning for the development of the Welsh dimension in the curriculum is particularly prominent in geography, art and music.

Education for sustainable development and global citizenship is a clear feature of each curriculum topic. The eco committee is proactive in promoting a wide range of initiatives including conservation of energy and water, litter picking, growing seeds and its members take their responsibilities seriously. Global citizenship is developed well through religious education and geography lessons, for example.

Teaching: Good

The quality of teaching in the school is consistently good. Teachers plan lessons purposefully to ensure the development of pupils' skills and knowledge, and organise a wide range of interesting tasks to secure pupils' engagement in their learning. The pace of lessons is usually well maintained and lessons are well structured to provide opportunities for individual, paired and group activities. Working relationships between teaching and support staff and pupils are excellent and reinforce high expectations of effort and behaviour. Learning resources are varied and interesting, and include a very effective use of a wide range of ICT. Teachers' stimulating questioning in introductory and plenary sessions develops, extends and reviews pupils' learning effectively. Support staff plan and assess pupils' work together with teachers and make a valued contribution to all pupils' development.

The school has effective policies and procedures for the assessment and recording of pupils' progress and for reporting to parents. Teachers mark work consistently in line with agreed success criteria and make good use of constructive comments to help pupils understand how to improve their work. Pupils' assessment of their own work is well established through the school and their assessment of the work of other pupils is developing well. Teachers and pupils work together to set realistic and ambitious targets for improvement. Assessment for learning strategies are used consistently in lessons across the school. Teachers use the results of their regular assessments of foundation phase outcomes and national curriculum levels together with some standardised tests effectively to plan their lessons. Annual reports to parents give clear judgements about their children's achievements, and include the opportunity for a meeting with their teacher.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The school is a caring community with an inclusive ethos. Effective arrangements exist to support pupils' health and wellbeing including their moral, social, cultural and spiritual development. Pupils and parents find the staff approachable and helpful and appreciate the ease of access when advice and guidance is required. Staff work hard to ensure that all pupils experience success and they encourage pupil involvement in school life through a wide range of cultural and sporting activities. Provision for pupils with ALN is good and they receive effective targeted support that has a positive effect on their learning and progress. The school has effective partnerships with specialist services that include the educational psychologist, Behavioural Support Service, health and social services. Very effective use is made of learning support assistants and they make a valuable contribution to the progress

made by pupils with ALN. Individual education plans are rigorous and regularly reviewed with pupils and parents. Pupils contribute to the development of school and class rules and they fully understand the expectations regarding behaviour and discipline. Registers are taken promptly and absences are correctly recorded. The schools policies and procedures for safeguarding fully meet statutory requirements.

Learning environment: Good

The school is a fully inclusive community where diversity is recognised and celebrated. Pupils have positive attitudes to diversity and multiculturalism that is promoted well through the personal and social education programme, assemblies and wider school activities. Pupils have equal opportunity to access all areas of the curriculum and the wide range of activities on offer. Staff actively encourage pupils to challenge stereotypes and celebrate differences.

The school buildings and newly built sports hall are of a high standard and offers an appealing, safe and welcoming environment for all learners. The spacious outside areas are utilised effectively to deliver a thought provoking outdoor learning resource. The classrooms are decorated with bright colourful displays of pupils work to provide stimulating learning areas. The school has a good range of resources, which are used well to promote the learning and teaching.

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?	Good
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Leadership: Good

The headteacher, supported effectively by the deputy headteacher and other senior managers, provides a clear educational direction for the work of the school. Effective leadership has continued to move the school forward since the last inspection. This is demonstrated by the improvement in standards, the school's good use of self-evaluation to improve provision and the effective organisation of the foundation phase. Good relationships between staff and a smooth-running administration have a positive effect on the whole learning environment. Staff share common values and have a real sense of purpose to their work. The effective senior management team ensure there is consistency in the structures and systems across the school. There are effective systems for continuing professional development, which lead to good teaching and learning in nearly all classes. Leaders communicate a driving ambition to further raise standards and improve provision. Governors are well informed about the school's performance through regular visits and well-written headteacher's reports. There is an appropriate range of committees to oversee the work of the school. Policies and initiatives, including those that meet local and national priorities, are implemented appropriately. The school has achieved 'Investors in People' standard for the second time.

Improving quality: Good

The school has good procedures for self-evaluation. Senior managers have a clear picture of the school's performance, its strengths and areas for development and this is a strong feature of leadership. There is a wide range of monitoring activities, including accurate lesson observations. The self-evaluation report produced for the

inspection was an informative document as a result. Effective use is made of detailed assessment information to set targets for improvement and identify groups of pupils that are underperforming. All the information gathered is used to produce a detailed and clear school development plan. The whole self-evaluation process ensures that pupils achieve good standards in relation to similar schools. This demonstrates that the school has good prospects for further improvement. The school seeks the views of parents/carers, pupils and the community appropriately. These networks of professional practice make a good contribution to the school's overall provision. The school is developing a culture of collaboration with the active engagement of all staff. This increases their professional knowledge and skills through 'whole-school' learning experiences.

Partnership working: Good

The school works well with a range of partners, employers and organisations. They all make a positive contribution to improving outcomes for pupils. The school has effective links with the local cluster of schools and the LA and works collaboratively to improve moderation processes to ensure that teacher assessments are accurate at the end of each key stage. Teachers share best practice, which strengthens the schools capacity for continuous improvement. The induction arrangements for children entering the school helps them to settle quickly and the transition arrangements with the local comprehensive school enables smooth transfer to the next stage of learning. The active parent teacher association makes a significant contribution to school life. Nearly all the parents are very supportive and appreciate the work of the school. The school has recently achieved the Investors in Families Award.

Resource management: Good

Resources are managed very well. Teaching and support staff are deployed effectively with well managed planning, preparation and assessment time for staff to plan effectively. Effective performance management systems are established for teaching staff. Spending priorities are directly linked to the school improvement plan and this is monitored and reviewed regularly by the governing body. The school offers good value for money in terms of quality of provision and the standards achieved by pupils.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

Ninety-five parents/carers returned questionnaires. They nearly all agreed that their children like school and that staff expected their children to work hard and do their best. They also nearly all agreed that their children were helped to settle in when they started school. Most parents/carers agreed that their children made good progress. Nearly all parents/carers agreed that the school was well run. A very few parents/carers disagreed homework was appropriate or that they were kept well informed about their children's progress.

Responses to learner questionnaires

There were 99 questionnaires returned by pupils in key stage 2. All pupils agree that they feel safe in school. They also agree that the school teaches them to keep healthy and there are plenty of opportunities to take regular exercise. All pupils agree that their teachers help them make progress and they know who to ask if they find work difficult. A very small minority of pupils disagreed that behaviour in the school was good and that they could get on with their work in class.

Appendix 2

The inspection team

Mr Stephen Dennett	Reporting Inspector
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Ms Helen Adams	Lay Inspector
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Mr Trevor Cole	School Nominee

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Year groups and key stages

Schools use a common system of numbering year groups from the start of compulsory schooling to 18 years of age. This system emphasises the importance of continuity and eases communication among schools, governing bodies, parents and LEAs.

The term 'Reception' (R) refers to the year group of pupils in a primary school who reach the age of five during the academic year. Year 1 refers to the year group of pupils who reach the age of six during the academic year and so on. Year 13 is the year group of students who reach the age of 18 during the academic year.

Primary phase:

Year	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
Ages	4-5	5-6	6-7	7-8	8-9	9-10	10-11

Secondary phase:

Year	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13
Ages	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18

The four key stages cover the following year groups:

Key stage 1	Year 1 and Year 2
Key stage 2	Year 3 to Year 6
Key stage 3	Year 7 to Year 9
Key stage 4	Year 10 and Year 11